

ORIGINAL



EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

December 18, 2002

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Ms. Marlene H. Dortch  
Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 - 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Room TW-A325  
Washington, DC 20554

DEC 18 2002

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Re: Section 68.4(a) of the Commission's Rules **Governing** Hearing Aid  
Compatibility Telephone WT Docket No. 01-309 **Ex Parte**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

This is to inform you that on December 17, 2002 **representatives** of Siemens ICM, Siemens Corporation and Cingular Wireless **met** in separate meetings with Commissioner Kevin J. Martin and Sam Feder, Legal Advisor; Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy and John Branscome, Acting Legal Advisor; and Hi-yan **Tramont**, Senior Legal Advisor in the **Office** of Chairman Michael K. Powell, in order to address issues related to the above referenced proceeding. The attached **document** was used for discussion purposes.

Please associate this notification and accompanying material with the referenced docket proceeding. The representatives for **Siemens** were Ross Vincenti, Mark **Esherrick** and Steve Berger (outside consultant). The representatives for Cingular Wireless **were** Susan Palmer, and Ben Almond.

**If there** are any questions concerning this matter, please contact **the** undersigned

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben G. Almond".

Ben G. Almond  
Vice President, Federal Regulatory Affairs

Attachement

Cc: Commissioner Kevin J. Martin  
Sam Feder  
Bryan Tramont  
Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy  
John Branscome

No. 01-309-000001 071  
FEB 18 2003

# Siemens/Cingular: A Productive Collaboration



## Why Are We Working Together?

- Our goal is to improve HAC, and access in general.
- We consider this to be a smart business decision.
- We want to accelerate the adoption of the most-beneficial technologies.
- We want to improve communication of known solutions to end-users.

## How Are We Working Together?

- Cingular is working with its major handset vendors to address HAC.
- Siemens has a unit that manufactures mobile phones, and another that manufactures hearing aids.
- Siemens is testing hearing aids and mobile phones together to explore the interaction between RF emission levels and RF immunity. **Siemens is in a unique position to conduct unbiased testing of the interaction of RF emission levels and immunity.**
- Cingular and Siemens **are working together to conduct** field trials and communicate more effectively with consumers.

# There Is No Silver Bullet

cingular  
WIRELESS

SIEMENS  
mobile



Increased  
Hearing Aid  
Volume

TTY Devices

T-Coil Coupling

RF-Immune Hearing Aids

Special Accessories

- There is a wide variety of hearing loss severity; therefore a range of solutions should be used to improve mobile phone usability.
- The market is providing an increasing number of hearing aids with good immunity to RF from mobile phones. Major improvements since the 1990s.
- Consumers will benefit significantly if these improvements are quantified and then clearly communicated – they will be able to make educated selections of mobile phones, hearing aids, and special accessories.



## **We Have Concrete Next Steps Planned**

- Siemens is conducting laboratory testing of its hearing aids and its mobile phones to study interference levels during use.

*Targeted completion during early Q1 2003.*

- We expect positive results, and will conduct field testing with reputable organizations service people with hearing loss, such as Gallaudet University and Self-Help for Hard of Hearing People.

*Targeted completion during mid Q2 2003.*

- With continued guidance from hearing loss experts, we will increase communication bandwidth through our sales forces and through mass-market information channels. This will support efforts by Cingular and other carriers to provide enhanced product selection materials.

*Targeted implementation during 2<sup>nd</sup> half 2003.*

# Issues With Mobile Phones and T-Coils

## ***Usability Issues***

- Between 70% and 80% of hearing aids do not have T-Coils.
- Many people who do have T-Coils report that they do not use the T-Coil.

## ***Technical Issues***

- T-Coil couplings cannot be RF-immunized and are not secure. ***If the ability to provide inductive coupling is built into handsets, the privacy and security of digital wireless communications will be compromised.***

## ***Regulatory Issues***

- FCC Part 68 HAC rules do not deal with interference or signal quality.
- FCC Part 68 HAC rules were designed for “wired” phones. As a result, a mobile phone could be technically compliant but still unusable.

## ***Recommendation***

- Siemens believes that a T-Coil requirement for mobile phones will cause the industry to incur significant cost while providing little or no material benefit to consumer.

# Summary Recommendations for FCC



- Maintain HAC Act exemption, and remind carriers/manufacturers of their responsibility to address HAC under Section 255.
- Enhance charter and role of standards bodies that have proven success working jointly with the FCC and the FDA in determining technical requirements.
- Create an independent steering committee, ***composed of representatives of the FCC, FDA, manufacturers of handsets and hearing aid and representatives of the hard of hearing community***, to report on current state of mobile phone and hearing aid usability as well as make recommendations to achieve policy objectives.
- Consider a further notice seeking comments on how best to educate consumers regarding product selection.
- Revise Part 24.232 to allow exploration of directional antennas.
- Encourage industry participants to conduct testing similar to that undertaken by Siemens.

**RECOMMENDATION DETAIL**  
SUPPORTING WT DOCKET NO. 01-309 *EX PARTE*

- Maintain HAC Act Exemption, and remind carriers of their responsibility to address HAC under Section 255.
  - ⇒ Removing the exemption detracts from the testing and analysis required to quantify existing levels compatibility among mobile phones, hearing aids, and accessories.
- Enhance charter and role of standards bodies that have proven success working jointly with the FCC and the FDA in determining technical requirements.
  - ⇒ A number of mobile phone and hearing aid manufacturers have used similar forums to address HAC.
  - ⇒ Support of both the FCC and FDA is of critical importance.
- Create an independent steering committee to report on the current state of mobile phone and hearing aid usability.
  - ⇒ Should recommend policy for improving access as needed.
  - ⇒ Should provide information on best practices implemented by participants in either the mobile phone or hearing aids industries.
  - ⇒ Should make recommendations and assist industry participants in developing and addressing effective information to support HAC product selection.
  - ⇒ Should work with consumer organizations and hearing health professionals to develop recommendations for outreach efforts with the hard of hearing community.
- Consider a further notice seeking comments on how to best:
  - ⇒ Educate consumers regarding product selection.
  - ⇒ Account for the barriers (competitive, legal, etc.) that presently constrain companies from performing compatibility testing.
  - ⇒ Identify and implement best practices in improving usability of digital wireless technologies.
- Revise FCC Part 24.232 to permit further exploration of directional antennas
- Encourage industry participants to conduct mobile phone/hearing aid interference testing similar to that undertaken by Siemens.